

New Study Shows Adults Treated for Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Vulnerable to Hazards of Wildfires

The American Cancer Society led research to be presented at the 2023 ASCO Quality Care Symposium

ATLANTA, October 27, 2023 — New research by scientists at the [American Cancer Society](#) (ACS) and the University of California, San Francisco, shows individuals in the United States undergoing radiotherapy for non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) who are exposed to wildfires near the treating facility have worse overall survival than unexposed individuals. The findings will be presented at the annual [American Society of Clinical Oncology \(ASCO\) Quality Care Symposium](#) in Boston, October 27 – 28, 2023.

In the study led by [Dr. Leticia Nogueira](#), scientific director, health services research at the American Cancer Society and senior author of the paper, scientists identified 228,138 patients who initiated definitive radiotherapy for nonoperative locally advanced NSCLC between 2004 and 2019 from the hospital-based National Cancer Database. Exposure was defined as a wildfire disaster declaration (identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency) in the county where the patient was being treated. Overall survival was defined as the age when radiation therapy started and the age of death, last contact, or study end.

Study results showed individuals whose facility had a wildfire disaster declared within 12 weeks of their radiation start date had worse overall survival than unexposed individuals.

Researchers emphasized individuals undergoing radiotherapy for NSCLC are a vulnerable population to the hazards of wildfires. The unique needs and vulnerabilities of this vulnerable population must be prioritized in emergency preparedness and climate adaptation efforts of oncology institutions.

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About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a leading cancer-fighting organization with a vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. For more than 100 years, we have been improving the lives of people with cancer and their families as the only organization combating cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support. We are committed to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. To learn more, visit [cancer.org](#) or call our 24/7 helpline at 1-800-227-2345. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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